

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PRAGUE 03628 230908Z
ACTION INR-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EA-10 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 /030 W
-----001150 231018Z /15

R 221500Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO AMEMBASSY RANGOON
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4370

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 3628

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, XC, BM, SN, TH, CZ
SUBJECT: NEW CZECHOSLOVAK AMBASSADOR TO BURMA, SINGAPORE, THAILAND

REF: STATE CA 4729, OCTOBER 15, 1971 NOTAL

1. MIROSLAV ZEMLA, A CAREER DIPLOMAT, HAS BEEN NAMED CZECHOSLOVAK AMBASSADOR TO ADDRESSEE POSTS, RESIDENT IN RANGOON, REPLACING LADISLAV JETMAR.

2. ZEMLA, 52, RECEIVED A DOCTORATE IN LAW AT PRAGUE'S CHARLES UNIVERSITY AND JOINED THE CZECHOSLOVAK FOREIGN SERVICE IN 1948. IN 1950 HE WAS SENT TO KABUL AS FIRST SECRETARY AND CHARGE. HE LATER SERVED ON THE KOREAN ARMISTICE COMMISSION AND AS FIRST SECRETARY IN PEKING. DURING 1956 AND 1957 HE WAS CHARGE D'AFFAIRES IN HANOI. AFTER A STINT IN THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS DEPARTMENT OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK FOREIGN MINISTRY AND ATTENDANCE AT SEVERAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES, ZEMLA WENT TO OTTAWA AS AMBASSADOR (1964-68). AFTER ANOTHER TOUR IN THE MINISTRY HE WAS AMBASSADOR TO LONDON (1971-74), AND THEN ASSUMED HIS MOST RECENT POST AS DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL LAW IN THE MINISTRY.

3. IN OUR DEALINGS WITH HIM, WHICH INCLUDED NEGOTIATION OF A
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CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGES AGREEMENT AND SEVERAL CIVIL AIR MATTERS, WE FOUND ZEMLA TO BE A TOUGH BARGAINER, CRAFTY IN ARGUMENT, AND QUICK TO SEIZE ON WHAT HE VIEWS AS WEAKNESSES IN HIS ADVERSARY'S POSITION, UNABASHEDLY REVERSING HIS OWN POSITION WHEN THE SITUATION WARRANTED. HIS COMMAND OF ENGLISH IS SUPERB AND HE CAN BE QUITE GREGARIOUS.

4. ZEMLA IS CONSIDERED IDEOLOGICALLY ULTRA-ORTHODOX AND WAS REPORTEDLY SLATED TO BE REMOVED FROM THE MFA BY THE REFORMIST DUBCEK REGIME IN 1968. IN SPITE OF THESE CREDENTIALS, HE HAS SINCE RETURNING FROM LONDON APPARENTLY BEEN UNDER A PROFESSIONAL CLOUD AND KEPT IN A POSITION BELOW WHAT HIS ABILITIES AND EXPERIENCE QUALIFY HIM FOR. WE DO NOT KNOW WHETHER THIS IS DUE TO THE 1972 CHANGE IN FOREIGN MINISTERS, THE DEFECTION OF ONE OF HIS STAFF DURING THE LONDON ASSIGNMENT OF INTRA-MFA INFIGHTING -- BUT ASSUME THE DEFECTION IS A PRINCIPAL CAUSE. ZEMLA, WHO ALSO SPEAKS FRENCH, GERMAN AND RUSSIAN IN ADDITION TO CZECH, IS MARRIED BUT HAS NO CHILDREN TO OUR KNOWLEDGE. HIS WIFE IS PLEASANT AND ALSO SPEAKS FLUENT ENGLISH.

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Message Attributes

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